

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT  
HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM  
HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL**

<b>PROJECT INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Project Title:</b> Capture of Desert Bighorn Sheep in Unit 22 and 24B for Supplemental Release into the Unit 37B Mineral Mountains	<b>Project No.</b> 10-601
<b>Region/GMU:</b> VI /22 and 24B	<b>HPC:</b> Payson
<b>Project Type:</b> Bighorn Sheep Capture Net Gunning from Helicopters	
<b>Project Description:</b> Thirty bighorn will be captured for release into the Mineral Mountains in Region VI. Approximately 22 females and 8 males (or a ratio of about 3 females to 1 male if fewer than 30 sheep are captured) will be captured. Fifteen of these sheep will be captured from Unit 22 and 15 from Unit 24B of Region VI. Population surveys were conducted in the Unit 22 and 24B during October 2009. In Unit 22 there were 99 sheep observed, an 83% increase since the last survey in 2006. The population estimate for this herd is $\pm$ 133 animals. In Unit 24B a total of 90 sheep were observed during this year's surveys. This represents an 84% increase from the previous high in 2006. The population estimate for this herd is $\pm$ 130 animals. Letters of support will be obtained from the Mesa Ranger District of the Tonto National Forest for capture efforts and the Gila District Tucson Field Office for release in Unit 37B Mineral Mountains.	
<b>Wildlife Species to Benefit:</b> Desert Bighorn Sheep	
<b>Possible Funding Partners:</b> ADBSS	
<b>Implementation Schedule:</b> <b>Beginning:</b> Week of November 15, 2011 <b>Completed:</b> 1 – 3 day capture operation	<b>NEPA Compliance: (if applicable)</b> <b>Completed:</b> Yes ____ No ____ <b>Projected Completion Date:</b>
<b>PROJECT FUNDING</b>	
<b>SBG Funds Requested:</b> \$ 30,000	
<b>Cost Share Funds:</b> \$	
<b>Total Project Costs:</b> \$ 30,000	
<b>PARTICIPANT INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Applicant:</b> Jon Hanna, Game Specialist Region VI (please print) <b>Telephone:</b> 480-324-3555	<b>Address:</b> 7200 East University Drive, Mesa, AZ 85207
<b>AGFD Contact and Phone No.</b> <b>(If applicant is not AGFD personnel)</b>	
<b>Coordinated with:</b> Game Branch, Region IV, ADBSS	<b>Date:</b> August 27, 2010
<b>Applicant's signature:</b> Jon Hanna	<b>Date:</b> August 27, 2010

**SEND COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO:**  
**Game Branch**  
**AZ Game and Fish Dept.**

(revised 7-02-2007)

**5000 W. Carefree Highway  
Phoenix, AZ 85086**

**WAS PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE LOCAL HPC?      YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO X\_\_\_\_\_**

**HAS PROJECT BEEN SUBMITTED IN PREVIOUS YEARS? NO      IF SO WAS IT FUNDED?**

**NEED STATEMENT/PROBLEM ANALYSIS:**

The Mineral Mountains area has been identified in AGFD and BLM documents for the last two decades as a priority area to establish a robust population of desert bighorn sheep. In 2000 AGFD conducted a statewide bighorn sheep habitat analysis using the Cunningham/Hansen Habitat Evaluation Model (Lee et al. 2000), and the Mineral Mountains area rated as the highest currently unoccupied bighorn sheep habitat.

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES:**

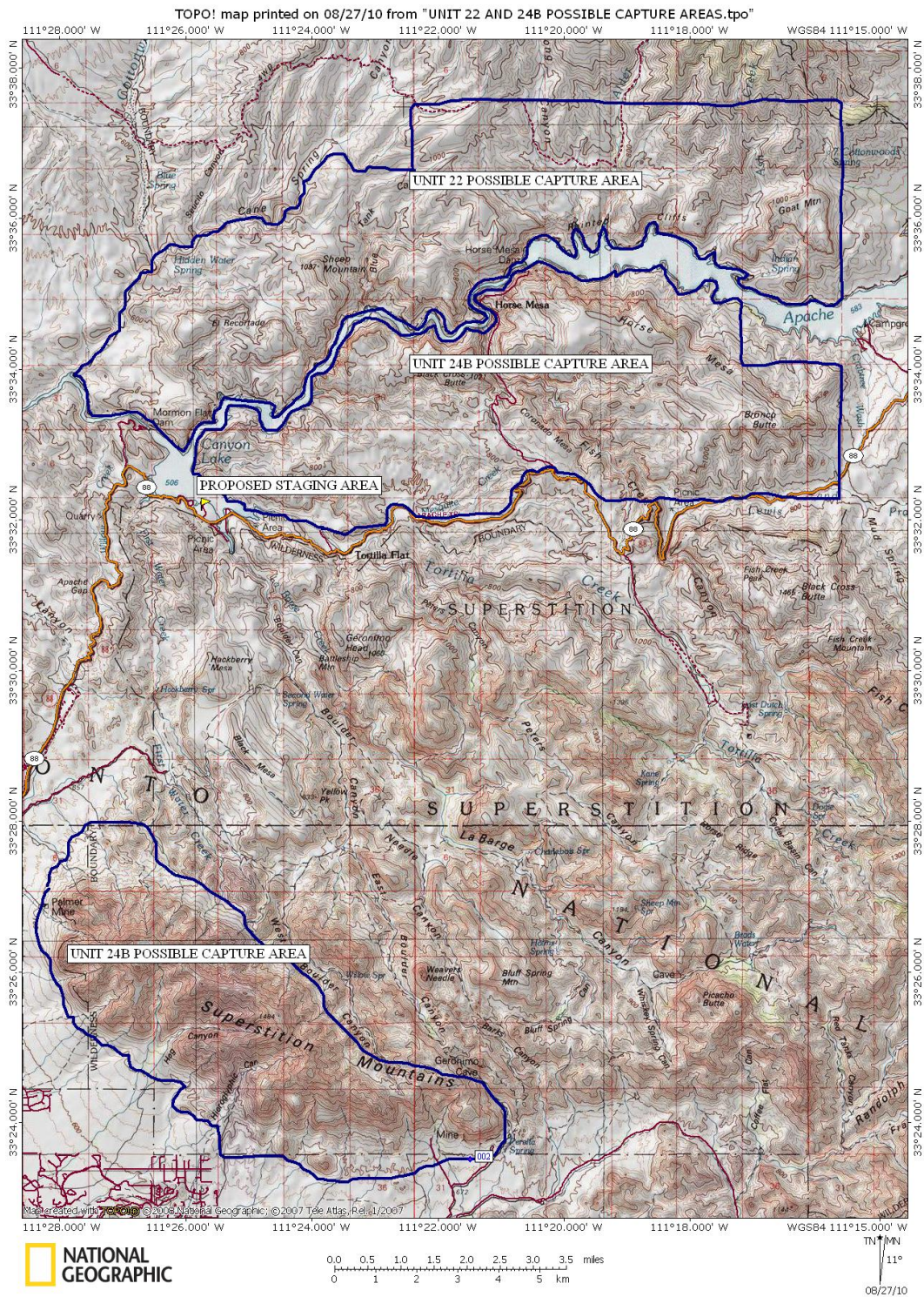
The purpose of initial translocation of bighorn sheep into the Mineral Mountains area was:

- to establish a viable population of bighorn sheep in suitable but mostly unoccupied bighorn habitat,
- to increase and diversify the resource values of public and State Trust land,
- to increase the number of bighorn in AGFD Region VI and in the state (once the population expands to carrying capacity of the new habitat),
- to increase the opportunity for the public to view bighorn sheep, and
- to increase the opportunity to hunt bighorn sheep, if the population expands to harvestable levels.

**PROJECT STRATEGIES:**

The initial release of bighorn sheep into the Mineral Mountains was in 2003 when 30 desert bighorn sheep (8 rams and 22 ewes) were released. The 30 sheep came from several sources; 13 from the Trigo Mountain, 1 from the Chocolates, 5 from the New Waters, and 11 from the Plomosas. A supplemental release occurred in 2007. These sheep, seven ewes, one lamb, and two rams came from the Trigo Mountains. Region VI is planning the second supplemental release during the week of November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011 with capture of up to 30 bighorns from Unit 22 and 24B.

**PROJECT LOCATION:**



Areas to be considered for capturing bighorns in Unit 22 and 24B of Region VI.



**LAND OWNERSHIP AT PROJECT SITE (Please state specifically if PRIVATE PROPERTY and provide landowner's name):**

All capture operations will occur on the Tonto National Forest. The capture area overlays public lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service and will involve the Four Peaks and the Superstition Wilderness.

**IF PRIVATE PROPERTY, IS THERE A STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LANDOWNER AND THE DEPARTMENT?**

**HABITAT DESCRIPTION:**

Capture area is in the Arizona Upland Sonoran Desertscrub.

**ITEMIZED USE OF FUNDS:**

Two helicopters will be needed for a predicted two day capture effort. Cost for two helicopters should be approximately 15K each day.

**LIST COOPERATORS AND DESCRIBE POTENTIAL PARTICIPATION:**

USFS assist with processing.

BLM assist with release.

ADBSS assist with funding and processing and release.

**PROJECT MONITORING PLAN:**

An operational release plan for a November 2011 Mineral Mountains bighorn sheep translocation is attached.

**PROJECT MAINTENANCE:**

NA

**PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT TO BE FILED BY:**

Jon Hanna, Game Specialist Region VI